



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

On Thursday, September 27, hundreds of tourism destinations around the world will recognize World Tourism Day and Arizona will be no exception. Endorsed by the U.N. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), this event encourages the international community to look beyond country borders and acknowledge the positive impact the travel industry has in all our communities. The tourism industry is a vital component to the economy. For the Grand Canyon state, travel and tourism continues to be one of Arizona's most stable economic drivers by bringing prosperity to all 15 counties and directly employing more than 100,000 Arizona residents. On a national level, the travel industry has generated more than \$700 billion to the U.S. economy and directly employs more than seven million people. Events like World Tourism Day help us to step back and appreciate how much this industry contributes to our daily lives.

In addition to World Tourism Day, National Parks Service will be celebrating National Public Lands Day on Saturday, September 29. Entry fees to all national parks will be waived for the day. I encourage everyone to take advantage of this opportunity and visit some of Arizona's beautiful national parks

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

AOT Needs Calendar of Events

AOT is requesting information to be considered for the calendar of events posted at www.ArizonaGuide.com. The calendar is currently updated with events through December 2007, and will soon be adding 2008 information. Events to be considered must be open to the public and of interest to participants or spectators from neighboring communities across Arizona or from out of state. Submissions should include the date, including the year; community in which the event takes place, name of event; venue; venue address; description; admission price, event time; phone number and/or Web site for the public to obtain additional information. Please include your contact information so that we may reach you with any questions we may have prior to posting your event. Photography is encouraged, (images should be a minimum of 300 DPI at 4"x5" original size) and we can supply you with an image information form. Additional events through December 2007 may also be submitted immediately if the event is not posted. Please check the Web site to see if your event is already included. If you have questions or would like an event submission form, please contact Marjorie Magnusson at 602-364-3695, by fax at 602-364-3702 or via e-mail at Mmagnusson@azot.gov.

Industry News

State Dept. Says Passport Services Returning to Normal

The State Department indicated that it has made significant headway in processing a backlog of passport applications. As a result, the agency said in a statement, that it "has restored passport service to the standard six-to-eight-week processing time for routine passport applications, and no more than three weeks for expedited service." At one point, the department reportedly had as many as 3.1 million unprocessed passport applications pending, even as it received tens of thousands of new applications each month. But with the summer rush now ending, the department has regained a level of normalcy at a time when airline travelers flying to Bermuda, the Caribbean, Canada and Mexico will be once again required to possess a valid passport. A temporary rule, which eased the requirements of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, expires Sept. 30. (*Travel Weekly.com*, 9/7)

Park Service to Waive Fees on National Public Lands Day

All National Park Service sites, including Grand Canyon National Park, will offer free visitor admission on Saturday, Sept. 29, in observance of National Public Lands Day. Entrance fees and commercial tour fees will also be waived at Grand Canyon. However, recreational user fees, such as backcountry permit fees, camping fees and fees for other activities offered in the parks will not be waived. (*Special to TA*)

Dollar Hits New Low Vs. Euro

The dollar hit its lowest mark on record against the euro, as the threat of a U.S. recession sank in among investors around the world. Yesterday in New York, one euro hit an intraday high of \$1.3914 and finished the session at \$1.3906, the European commission currency's highest level since its 1999 launch. It was up from \$1.3836 a day earlier. (*Page C14, Wall Street Journal*)

Congratulations to Hopi Festival at the Museum of Northern Arizona

The American Bus Association (ABA) recently named the Museum of Northern Arizona's Annual Hopi Festival of Arts and Culture as the top event of 2008. Each year the ABA publishes a list of top 100 national events for visitors to experience. The Hopi Festival not only made the ABA list but received top honors as **the** event for visitors to experience for 2008. The Museum of Northern Arizona's Annual Hopi Festival of Arts and Culture immerses visitors in Hopi language and artistry, revealing the very essence of today's Hopi people and the ideas that pervade their daily life. The festival was started by Museum founders Harold and Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton in an effort to encourage the survival of Hopi arts and crafts. The festival is now a tradition of Hopi families. More than 55 artisans travel from the Hopi mesas to share with visitors their life and artistic creations. Authentic expressions of cultural traditions and the voices of knowledgeable educators join together, creating cultural understanding and a forum for dialogue. Festival visitors gain insight from carvers, painters, jewelers, potters, quilters and basket and textile weavers as well as through cultural presentations, storytelling, music and dancing. Please visit www.buses.org to review the entire list.